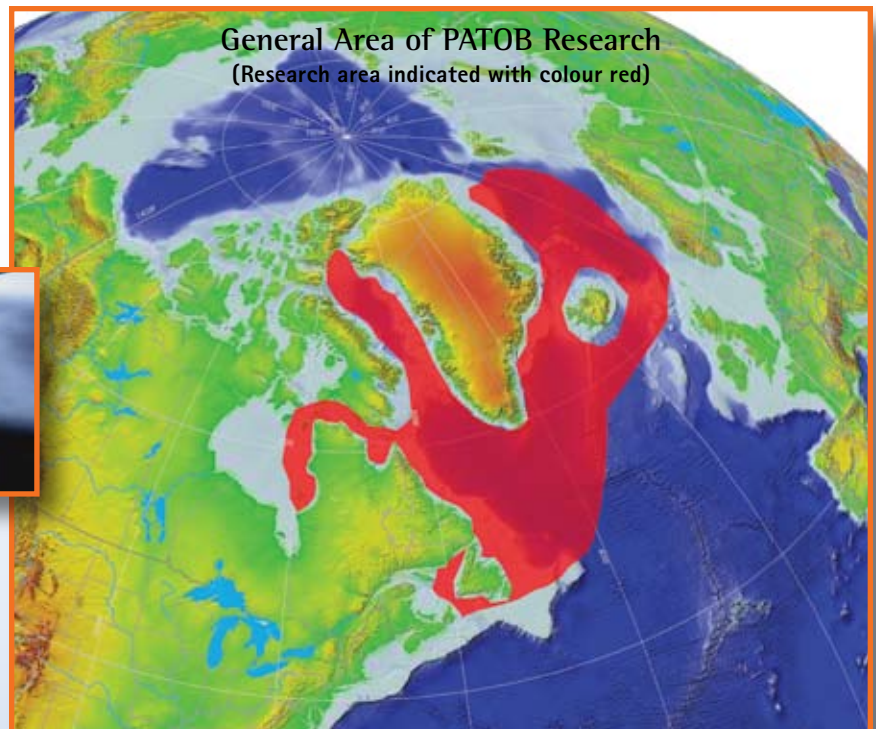
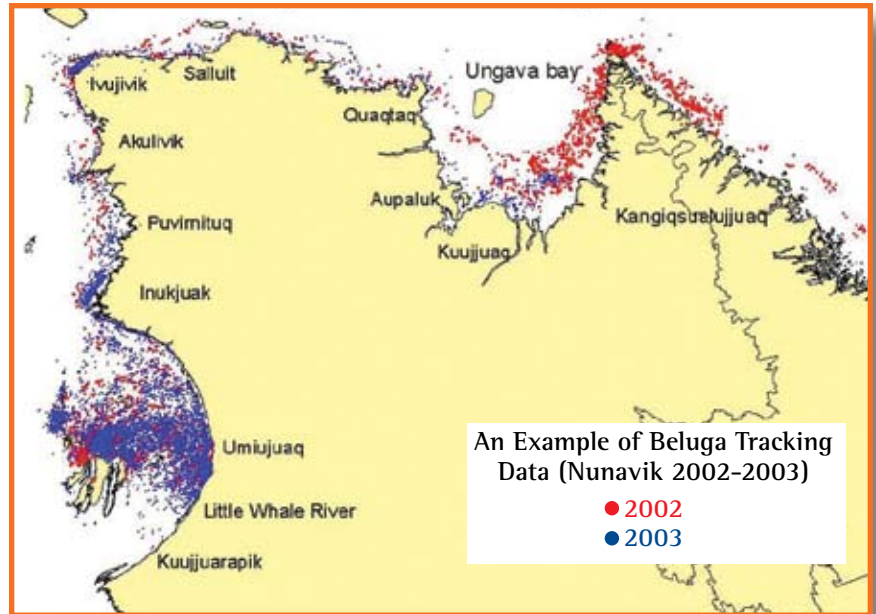




Pan-Arctic Tagging of Beluga Whales

This research study will focus on understanding the behavior of Beluga Whales. A number of whales will be monitored and tracked; this is done by tagging the whales with satellite transmitters. The tracking devices record data on whale movement, and also provide oceanographic data on water temperature and salinity.

Tracking whale movement provides direct information about Beluga habitats, migration corridors, and overwintering areas. By understanding Beluga movement and migration patterns, management strategies can be developed to prevent over-harvesting, and to ensure continued access to Beluga as a food source, and as a traditional benefit. These concerns are particularly important in the Eastern



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part of Hudson Bay where the population has declined over the past twenty years. Belugas are at the top of the marine food chain. Because of their major role in the arctic ecosystem, the health of the Beluga is important to all Arctic life.

The tags on the whales will also provide oceanographic knowledge which will help in the creation of ocean forecast models. Ocean forecast models contain information about water currents and masses. These models will aid in the development of simulation scenarios, to predict what changes are likely to occur under global climate change. The researchers involved with this study will collaborate with other international Beluga tagging programs, and local hunters will be engaged to increase understanding of Beluga habits. Traditional knowledge and scientific approaches will be combined.



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